

RI State Conservation Committee
17 Smith Avenue, Greenville, RI 02828
(401) 949-1480

MEETING MINUTES

January 20, 2005

9:15 AM

USDA/NRCS Conference Room

Ed Renehan called the meeting to order at 9:20 pm.

In attendance were:

**Members – Ed Renehan-SRICD Representative, Eric
Offenberg-Governor's Appointee – Gregg Cassidy-DEM
Representative – Paul Dolan-NRICD Representative.**

**Advisors – Judy Doerner-NRCS – Beverly O'Keefe-Water Resource
Board – Kevin Nelson-Statewide Planning**

**Tom Sandham-ERICD, Alicia Lehrer-SRICD, Gina DeMarco and Wendy
Hoyle-NRICD.**

I. Election of Chair

It was recommended that we elect an interim chair until we have full membership on the board.

Eric nominated Ed Renehan as interim chair, Paul seconded.

Unanimous

II. Minutes

Motion was made to accept the November 29th meeting minutes.

Eric/Paul Unanimous

III. Financial Report

The financial report was distributed.

Motion was made to accept the January 20th financial report.

Paul/Eric Unanimous

IV. Reports

a. Districts

NRICD

-Ed Baker has retired as a full board member; Marc Tremblay is interested

in replacing Ed. The election will be held February 2nd.

-The District is working on the upcoming seedling sale. Plan on including

a rain garden/butterfly package.

-The Rain Garden Demonstration Project is being developed and applications

for grants to assist with the project have been submitted.

-The Scituate Reservoir Watershed Education Program has received videos

of the PSA that hope to be televised in conjunction with the billboard

campaign.

-A meeting for the Pocasset River Project will be held January 26th at 1:30pm.

-On January 25th the entitlement program-CSP, will hold a meeting at the

Laurel Grange in Harmony.

SRICD

-The District has applied for the Citizens Bank Community Champion Grant.

This grant is for \$25,000 and will include assistance with publicity and

volunteers.

-They will hold an Open House on February 23rd in the NRCS Conference

Room and Southern's office from 4-6pm. Legislators and municipalities have

been invited.

**-The seedling sale will once again be held at East Farm's
Open House and
Crabapple Festival May 14th.**

ERICD

**-The District has outreached to the community for potential
new board**

members. There are 5 individuals interested.

-Projects they are been working on:

**§ Grazing Land Initiative-Over 10 landowners have shown interest in
upgrading their fields to good quality hay. The
Town of Portsmouth is
also interested in working with their open space
land.**

**§ They have working with beef producers in developing a coop
similar
to Rhody Fresh Milk. RDC has granted \$7,000 for a feasibility
study.**

**§ Tom has made contact with all the vineyards in the area to educate
on the various programs available to them.**

**§ Field Days will be held the end of March to display the assortment
of fencing available to landowners. Distributors will set up in a local
equestrian ring.**

§ On Eight Rod Farm refurbishing of different farm equipment for

refurbishing grasslands is being done. The purpose will be to see what method works best.

b. Advisors

Statewide Planning

-On March 12th there will be a Land and Water Summit; anyone interested can contact Kevin Nelson or the districts.

-The Ag Land Preservation Commission is in need of 1 or 2 appointees. If anyone is interested they can register online on the Governor's website.

The rules and procedures are scheduled for public hearing next month. The

final draft has been sent to DEM's legal department for review.

-The Land Use Plan Goals and Policies are being developed and hope to have a draft finalized in the spring and displayed online.

NRCS

-Judy distributed the FY 2005 allocations for their programs.

Judy reviewed

this report.

-Applications for the Grasslands Reserve Program have been extended to

March 25th after not receiving any applications.

DEM

-The Rivers Council has been working on how to get riparian buffers into

the FFOS program since this protects water bodies. These buffers would

include a large portion of urban areas. If the Rivers Council recommend

that landowners do this, they can apply and be assessed at current use value.

Gregg will email Wendy information on this matter.

-The Forest Resource Plan will soon be available for public comment.

Water Resource Board

-The Board is also in need of an individual to fill a vacancy on their board.

-The Board is participating in the Drinking Water Week Subcommittee.

Drinking Water Week is May 2nd – 6th.

c. Vacancies on State Committee

We discussed possible individuals that could serve on the RI State Conservation Committee. Names that were mentioned: Meg Kerr, Jane Sherman, and Scott Rabideau.

V. Old Business

a. RIACD Travel Budget

The Association has asked for assistance in travel expenses to the NACD

Annual Meeting. The State Committee has asked the Association to provide

the Committee with a budget since July 2004 and has not receive one. We

discussed what is the best way to handle requests for travel.

We will once

again request a budget from the Association.

Motion was made to review the State Committee's budget and make a

decision on travel at a meeting in February. Paul/Eric.

Unanimous

It was asked to have the financial report to included proposed figures.

VI. New Business

a. Vote on FFOS Recommended Values

-A letter from The FFOS Subcommittee was distributed indicating that

they recommend keeping the values the same for 2005. The Subcommittee

will be reviewing the methodology this year to make sure this is the still

the best technique to access values.

Motion was made to accept the FFOS Subcommittee's recommendation for

land use values. Paul/Gregg Unanimous

-There was comment that the open space category is confusing.

-The Subcommittee is in need of a person to fill the State Committee's

vacancy. Eric Offenbergl will be filling this vacancy.

VII. Other

-The need for individuals to fill the State Committee's vacancy was readdressed.

It was decided to contact persons recommended and to meet

again next month

to decide on a plan of action. Anyone knowing of other individuals that would be appropriate can bring these names next month.

-Our next meeting will be Wednesday, February 16th at 9:15 am.

-Carolyn Weymouth, Northern District director has recently passed away. She previously served on the State Committee. Arrangements have been made for Saturday.

-Kevin Nelson asked the State Committee if it would be appropriate for the Committee to prioritize land that the request for purchase of development

rights have been made. This would greatly assist for the Ag Land Preservation

Commission. There is some funding for this project. One suggestion was to

hire a grad student to gather the data needed to prioritize land. Kevin will

invite Rupert Friday to the next meeting to further explain the project.

Motion to adjourn at 10:40 am. Paul/Eric Unanimous